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# CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR LANGUAGE

(INTERIM)

## GRADE SEVEN - 1966



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

JUNE, 1966



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# The Language Program

## TEXTBOOKS:

### Grade VII

EITHER:

(a) Just English I

Patterns for Writing I

or

(b) Words and Ideas, Book I

(c) One of:

Pupil's Own Vocabulary Speller 3

or

My Spelling VII

or

Canadian Speller, Grade VII, Quance.

### Grade VIII

(1) Words and Ideas, Book 2.

(2) One of:

Pupil's Own Vocabulary Speller 3

or

My Spelling VIII

or

Canadian Speller, Grade VIII, Quance.

### Grade IX

(1) Words and Ideas, Book 3.



# Interim Curriculum Guide For Language Grade Seven - 1966

## I INTRODUCTION

### A. Basic Considerations

Language is the expression of thought and feeling. Children learn language through imitation and practice. At the same time they extend the maturity and scope of the ideas which they express. Society attempts to foster and refine this language development through formal education.

In the school language program a number of emphases are indicated. First, the emphasis should be on ideas and feelings. The aim should be the broadening of insight into that experience, the cultivation of his reactivity and imagination, and the provision of opportunities for expressing these through speaking and writing.

Second, the emphasis should be on the development of skills for ordering and perfecting expression. For purposes of teaching, skills may be isolated and stressed independently. At this stage, however, there is a danger that the teaching may become fragmented. It is the teacher's responsibility to integrate these skills into the processes of expression, and thus to treat language as a unified subject. The interrelationship of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and of the skills which constitute each of these must be made apparent to students in order to reinforce learning.

Third, the important considerations here are the interrelationship of these skills and a concern for the order in which they may be taught. These considerations determine the structure and sequence of the language program.

These emphases have been basic in the development of the junior high school language program and are vital for its implementation. The primary emphasis is on ideas, on concern for ideas, on selection of ideas, on expression of ideas, and on evaluation of ideas. Effective expression, however, requires attention to and development of many specific skills. Furthermore, attention to individual skills must lead ultimately to their effective use in expression. Their interrelationship and their integration into a unified view of language must be understood by students. This integration is achieved by attention to a structure and sequence which recognizes the nature of the relationships and considers priorities among skills. Thus the concern in the language program will be, first, with aiding the child to discover that he has something to say, then with helping him to say it. Progressively the child is enabled to see that the way in which he says anything affects what he has to say.

The facts and ideas which constitute the content of the writing may be drawn from various sources. The world of knowledge and ideas is infinite. The one gen-

eral guideline to be observed is that the content on which children write will be within their scope of knowledge.

A potential basis for practice in writing is content from other subjects. Literature, social studies, science and other subjects, provide a ready source of familiar material for composition.

While the language program should give students an insight into their language and into the way in which it works, the prime purpose of this program in the junior high school should be to improve and increase the students' facility in the use of language. The language program thus should concern itself with the development of language skills which may be applied to various communication situations.

This objective of the language program has implications for all areas of knowledge. As content from different subjects (as well as from other sources) is used as the basis for developing language skills, so these skills become the means of organizing and expressing ideas in all school areas. The skills developed in the language program — notemaking, summarizing, precis writing, outlining, sentence structure, clarity, logic, preciseness, emphasis, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary — become the general tools of expression in other subjects. The language program should serve other subjects; it should not, however, be subservient to them.

The work of the language teacher, thus, is basic to the work of teachers of other subjects. They will assume responsibility for the special language skills in their own subjects, skills ranging from the formulation of hypotheses in science and the making of assumptions in mathematics to the drawing of conclusions from historical evidence in social studies.

However, teachers of other subjects will also need to attend in their own classes to the basic language skills taught by the language teacher. Experience and research both suggest that unless attention is given to basic language skills in all subjects, students are not likely to maintain competence in these skills.

### B. Point of View

While the foregoing considers the language program in its broad scope, this section focuses on the junior high school language program specifically.

The general objective of the language program in the junior high school is clear, accurate, and fluent written expression. The child should write with an awareness of this objective. He learns to use many tools or skills of written expression: spelling, diction, punctuation, composition, as a means to an end. No

language skill is acquired and mastered for its own sake. Instead, the child writes, consciously using and perfecting the tools to increase his competence in the art of written expression, raising his standards as his skill increases. The general objective thus gives unity to the language program, making all the skills a means to the desired end: clear, accurate, pleasing, effective communication of ideas through writing.

The junior high school language program recognizes that in the elementary grades an emphasis has been made on extending and perfecting the skills of speaking and listening, which the child had when he started school. It also recognizes that the child has been introduced to the basic elements of the new skills of reading and writing. It recognizes, further, that he is able to expand his store of ideas, to reflect on them, and to record a series of related incidents, ideas or impressions in a well-organized paragraph.

## II EXPECTATIONS ON ENTERING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Students entering Grade VII are expected to be able to speak, listen, read and interpret instructions with some degree of accuracy and discrimination. They should be ready to use speaking and listening skills with considerable competence. They should also have a growing awareness of the interrelationship of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Other required skills expected of students at this level include the following:

1. The ability to write and recognize a complete sentence.
2. The ability to write (but without the requirements of identifying) basic simple, compound and complex sentences.
3. The ability to write a sequence of related sentences in a short theme.
4. A mastery of capitalization and punctuation skills including:
  - a. The use of capital letters in beginning sentences and proper nouns.

At the junior high school level, the attention to speaking and listening will continue. However, the emphasis of the language program will be on improving the writing skills and encouraging extensive discussion and reading to assist writing skills so that the child will increase his store of ideas and his ability to deal with them with insight, clarity, and precision.

As the objectives of the language program at elementary school level have been kept constantly in mind and as the skills have been practiced frequently, most children will enter the junior high school with mastery of language skills and an awareness of their use as a means to an end. The children will therefore be ready to apply both the skills they have mastered and their awareness of the aims of the language program to the new emphasis, that of clear, accurate, fluent written expression.

- b. The use of appropriate terminal punctuation to include the period, question mark and exclamation mark; common uses of the comma; the apostrophe and the hyphen.
5. The ability to use good manuscript form include:
  - a. Neat handwriting
  - b. Proper spacing and use of margins
  - c. Correct title form
  - d. Correct indentation
6. The ability to extract information from references and other pointed materials, specifically:
  - a. Dictionaries (spelling, meaning, pronunciation)
  - b. Elementary encyclopedia and other library references.

## III OBJECTIVES

### A. General Objective

The basic function of language is to communicate ideas and feelings. The general objective of the junior high school language program is to provide experiences in writing and in using the skills of speaking, listening and reading to improve writing. The desired end is that students will be aware of and enthusiastic about their use of language in thinking and in conveying ideas clearly, accurately and fluently.

### B. Specific Objectives

- (1) The achievement of form and order in expression of ideas
- (2) The achievement of clear, varied and lively sentences.
- (3) The improvement of other skills necessary for general competence in the use of language

SINCE THOUGHT AND ITS COMMUNICATION ARE THE AIMS OF THE LANGUAGE PROGRAM, THE ACQUISITION AND THE INTEGRATION OF SKILLS ARE ALWAYS TO BE REGARDED AS MEANS TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS

# JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LANGUAGE OUTLINE

Grade

VII

VIII

IX

## WRITING SKILLS

Objective: The achievement of form and order in the expression of ideas.

### Major Emphases

#### Composition

- (a) One-Paragraph Composition: An introduction to the purpose and structure of expository writing through a broad range of familiar and informational subjects.

- (b) Practice in writing single-paragraph reports using a single reference source.

#### Summaries

- (a) One-sentence summary of a paragraph.

- (b) Multi-sentence summary paraphrasing the essential content of one paragraph to indicate principal and supporting ideas.

- (c) Notemaking and Notetaking: Application of summary skills to oral and written content.

- (d) Informal use of summary skills in initial planning for paragraph writing.

#### Friendly Letters

### Major Emphases

#### 1. Composition

- (a) One-Paragraph Composition
  - i. Continued practice in expository writing.
  - ii. An introduction to the purpose and structure of: descriptive writing and narrative writing.

- (b) Practice in writing single-paragraph reports using two or three reference sources.

#### 2. Outlines

- (a) Sentence outline indicating the principal idea in each paragraph in a short sequence of related paragraphs.

- (b) Sentence outline indicating the principal and supporting ideas in each paragraph of a short sequence of related paragraphs.

- (c) Notemaking and Notetaking: Application of outline, as well as summary, skills to oral and written content.

- (d) Continued practice in informal use of outlining skills in initial planning for paragraph writing.

#### 3. Social and Courtesy Letters

- (a) Mastery of acceptable forms.
- (b) Concern for content, organization and reader's reaction.

### Major Emphases

#### 1. Composition

- (a) One-Paragraph Composition
  - i. Continued practice in expository narrative and descriptive writing.
  - ii. The development of an understanding of the interrelationship of exposition, narration and description in writing.
  - iii. Practice in using such interrelationships.

- (b) Emphasis on writing multi-paragraph compositions.

- (c) Continued practice in writing single-paragraph compositions.

- (d) Practice in writing multi-paragraph reports.

#### 2. Summaries and Outlines

- (a) Typical outlines for a series of related paragraphs.

- (b) Precis

- (c) Notemaking and Notetaking: Continued practice in these skills.

- (d) The planning outline as a tentative guide for writing.

#### 3. Business Letters

# JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LANGUAGE OUTLINE

Grade

VII

VIII

IX

## GRAMMAR AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Objective: The achievement of clear, varied and lively sentences through the application of grammatical concepts.

Major Emphases	Major Emphases	Major Emphases
1. Simple Sentence	1. Simple & Compound Sentences	1. Complex and Compound-Complex Sentences
(a) Four Patterns	(a) Simple sentence	
i. N.V.	Pattern 5 (NVNN)	
ii. N.V.N.	(b) Compound sentence: Combination	
iii. N.LV.A.	of basic patterns into a variety of	
iv. N.LV.N.	compound sentences.	
2. Modification	2. Modification	2. Modification: Subordinate Clauses.
(a) Nouns through use of:	(a) Prepositional phrases.	(a) Adjective clauses.
i. Nouns		
ii. Adjectives and determiners		
(b) Modification of verbs through use of:	(b) Appositives.	(b) Adverb clauses.
i. Adverbs		
ii. Intensifiers		
3. Substitution:	3. Tense:	3. Voice:
(a) Compounding of nouns and verbs.	(a) Simple present.	(a) Active
(b) Substituting pronouns for nouns.	Simple past	(b) Passive
	(c) Simple future.	
4. Grammar Nomenclature:	4. Grammar Nomenclature:	4. Grammar Nomenclature:
noun, verb, adverb, adjective, pronoun, conjunction, determiner, intensifier, preposition, object, complement, subject.	auxiliary, phrase, clause, indirect object.	relative pronoun, subordinate conjunction.

# JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LANGUAGE OUTLINE

Grade	VII	VIII	IX
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## PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION

Major Emphases	Major Emphases	Major Emphases
Review of elementary punctuation.	1. Single and double quotation marks.	Attention to acceptable use of punctuation in writing.
Further common uses of comma.	2. Semi-colon.	
Common uses of colon.		
Capitalization.		

## OTHER SKILLS

**Objective:** The improvement of other skills necessary for general competence in the use of language.

Major Emphases	Major Emphases	Major Emphases
The improvement of the skills of speaking and listening.	1. The improvement of the skills of speaking and listening.	1. The improvement of the skills of speaking and listening.
The extension of the skills and of the habit of reading.	2. The extension of the skills and of the habit of reading.	2. The extension of the skills and of the habit of reading.
The refinement of the accuracy of expression through the use of dictionaries and spellers.	3. The refinement of the accuracy of expression through the use of dictionaries and spellers.	3. The refinement of the accuracy of expression through the use of dictionaries and spellers.
The extension of library and research skills.	4. The extension of library and research skills.	4. The extension of library and research skills.

## V EXPECTATIONS ON LEAVING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Students enrolling in a Grade X Language program are expected to be able to employ a variety of writing skills which should include the following:

1. The ability to write and use effectively a variety of mature simple, compound, and complex sentences
2. The ability to write and use effectively the expository, descriptive, and narrative paragraph
3. The ability to organize and write a multi-paragraph theme of approximately two hundred and fifty words
4. The ability to use selected structural devices to improve the effectiveness of sentences in paragraphs
5. The ability to develop effective paragraphs by using various methods of organization
6. The ability to select and evaluate ideas from written materials and to organize and express these ideas in written form
7. The ability to extract information from reference and printed materials; specifically:
  - a. textbooks
  - b. dictionaries (six uses)
  - c. encyclopedia
  - d. yearbooks, almanacs and other reference materials.
8. The ability to use accurately and acceptably the skills of punctuation and capitalization.

## VI INTERPRETATION OF THE GRID

Although, within the junior high school language program, an attempt has been made to structure content and sequence in the three grades, teacher freedom is also recognized. Neither content nor sequence are intended to be rigidly adhered to. Language teachers are free to make adjustments. However, each teacher should be aware that this freedom implies responsibility to plan course material which is appropriate to the interests and abilities of students and that this freedom implies a responsibility to achieve the objectives of the program.

A rigidly imposed sequence of writing experiences may result in uninspired, mechanical, and routine writing if the sequence is not carefully related to the interests and abilities of students. Although the junior high school language program suggests definite language skills for specific grade levels, this guide recognizes the need for subsequent reinforcement and extension of these skills. The expository paragraph, for example, with its emphasis on logical ordering of events or processes may occupy a good portion of the time reserved for writing in the Grade VII. At the Grade IX level, exposition may be treated with more sophistication and depth to meet the interests, needs and abilities of Grade IX students. Sequence in the writing program must provide for recurrent deepening of understanding.

The outline indicates only the major emphases in the junior high program. Re-organization of suggested content within grade levels may be necessary to meet the particular needs of a class. Coverage of additional content to challenge more able students is encouraged; however, teachers should make certain that classes have competence in the language content structured for their grade before proceeding to a more sophisticated treatment of the same material.

Although the outline divides language skills into three broad areas, there is no suggestion that each of the areas be covered in isolation. The interrelationship of language skills is stressed at all times. Skills should be taught so that they complement and strengthen each other and contribute to the ultimate aim of the language program, the effective communication of ideas and feelings.

### Composition

The aim of the junior high school language program is clear, accurate, and interesting written expression. To this end the guide emphasizes simple forms of writing and suggests short pieces of purposeful writing rather than the writing of infrequent long themes.

One-paragraph compositions are emphasized throughout the junior high school program. Much emphasis is placed on exposition because of the practice it affords in organizing ideas, because of its flexibility of form and consequently because of its basic importance in all types of writing. While expository writing in the narrowest sense deals specifically with factual information, the intent in this guide is to extend the term of reference to encompass a much wider range of writing which although essentially informative, may contain elements of description and narration as well. The method of exposition may well apply to the writing of friendly and business letters, book reports, personal and imaginative adventures, diaries, and other assignments in which the student expresses an observation. Therefore, expository writing in this program may not necessarily be limited to writing in which the student uses his knowledge of factual material. It may also encompass writing on a broad range of familiar and informational topics derived from the student's experiences.

Although expository writing is introduced in Grade VII and descriptive and narrative writing in Grade VIII, the intention is not to limit a year's work to any one of these types. Thus, while it is expected that during the Grade VII year students will concentrate on exposition, they will have some opportunity to practice description writing and narration. Moreover, most natural writing is a blend of these three types, and the experienced teacher of language knows that it is difficult to differentiate among paragraph types. Hence there should be little emphasis on the identification and classification of paragraph types. Instead, the emphasis should be on coherent and interesting writing which covers a broad range of informational and familiar topics. The exact purposes and limitations of writing assignments must be made clear to students at all times. Only then will expository, narration, and description find their way naturally into what the student writes.

The term "creative writing" has been purposely omitted from the program lest it be interpreted in a narrow sense rather than in the sense of sincere and original expression of meaning. In reality all writing is creative if the student has organized his material and expressed his ideas so that the product is really his own. The composition program should provide practice for the development and expression of both imaginative and systematic thought.

## **Grammar**

Because the English language is a fluid and changing medium of communication, emphasis on vivid expression and good usage rather than emphasis on stereotyped grammatical classification should be the aim of the language teacher. There is abundant evidence to indicate that the isolated study of grammar does not necessarily result in better writing. For this reason the amount of grammar in the junior high school language program has been limited to basic essentials. An attempt has been made to structure most of the grammar study into the first two years of the junior high school language program.

Grammar presented through the structural approach is more meaningful and interesting to students because it lends itself to sentence construction rather than sentence analysis. Because of its systematic descriptive nature, it lends itself to an inductive approach. For these reasons principles of structural grammar have been introduced into the program. A meaningful study of parts of speech and sentence patterns as presented by linguistic scientists should give students a set of tools that should enable them to discuss their language problems and improve their written work. Because of the emphasis on writing, no more than twenty percent of the time given to the language program should be devoted to the study of grammar.

## **Spelling**

In the spelling program the junior high school language teachers' most important function is the creation of a spelling awareness. To this end the program will stress lists of personal errors and lists of commonly misspelled words of each grade level. A section on spelling hints and spelling improvement techniques will also be stressed at each grade level.

## **Speaking and Listening**

Speaking is the most frequent medium of communication. The course recognizes this view and intends that the teacher provide for a continuing program of speaking skills which includes discussions, reports, talks, dramatizations, and debates.

Listening skills will be strengthened in the junior high school language program through further practice of good listening habits.

## **Reading and Vocabulary**

The importance of reading in a language program cannot be ignored. The interrelationship between reading and writing is obvious. For this reason, the encouragement of wide reading as a basis for student writing needs to be stressed by the teacher.

The junior high school language program assumes that basic word-attack skills have been covered in the elementary school. Thus the reading and vocabulary section of the language program should concentrate on the development of a wide background of factual and imaginative ideas as well as the development of a good stock of vivid words. An interest in new words and a desire to possess new words must be instilled into students. Much attention should be given to word meaning through context throughout the three years of this language program. The etymological significance of words, word roots, affixes, and denotative and connotative meanings of words should constitute a significant portion of the reading-language program.

Through discussion and directed reading the student must be shown the various devices used to influence, inform, and convince others. Outlining skills, summarizing skills, and reporting skills are stressed in this guide as important skills stemming from a reading-language program.

## VII THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE

The objectives of the junior high school language program stress the unity of the course, that is that all language teaching is ultimately a means to the end that students will have something to write about and that they will write their ideas with clarity, precision, and grace.

It may be well, then, at the beginning of the Grade VII year, to spend a few periods exploring sources of ideas, to help the students to examine their own curiosity, likes and dislikes. This may be done partly through discussion of such diverse topics as the following: Who is your favorite uncle? What is your favorite TV program? What do you know about the provincial premier, or about the germination of seeds?

For the first two areas and others similar to these, students realize that the topic is personal to each one and that having something to say is bound up in why one likes or dislikes a person or thing. For the last two areas, they will see that they require factual information which may come from an amazing variety of sources: textbooks, encyclopedias, newspapers, magazines, and other people. Excitement about ideas will surely grow as the student realizes that there are two boundless worlds at his disposal, the world of his own mind and the material world which surrounds him, and that he may choose freely from both worlds wherever his curiosity or fancy leads him.

It is not too early now, at the beginning of the Grade VII year, to introduce the idea of a topic sentence. Although there are as many approaches to this concept as there are teachers, here is one which may be pleasant and profitable.

Suppose we manufacture a fictitious favorite uncle. Let the children describe him physically if it will help them to know him as a person, different members of the class contributing the qualities which compose this eclectic relative.

The next step is for students to offer general statements, any one of which could be the topic sentence of the paragraph. One may say simply, "Uncle Jim is my favorite." Another may suggest, "My Uncle Jim is the friendliest man in the world", and still another, "I prefer Uncle Jim because he is so kind."

The children will soon see that each sentence is general enough in what it says to introduce a paragraph. They will also see that each of these sentences has a key word: "favorite", "friendliest", and "kind", respectively.

At this point, each child could choose a topic sentence, one of those given or his own after it has

been submitted for scrutiny, and list in point form ideas which support the idea of the key word. In this way, students learn that, although all the paragraphs are to be about the mythical Uncle Jim, each topic sentence will require an entirely different paragraph. In other words, the topic sentence is general in nature but very definite in indicating the material which the paragraph will contain.

In a future lesson, the stress will fall upon the concluding sentence so that the students will grasp the idea of the conclusion as repetition with a different or repetition in a nutshell.

For instance, let us return to Uncle Jim and examine the topic sentences again. "Uncle Jim is my favorite" may conclude with the sentence "You may have the rest of the uncles, but give me Uncle Jim." On the other hand, "Uncle Jim is the friendliest man in the world" would require a concluding sentence like the following: "Just the thought of Uncle Jim keeps me from feeling friendless on my loneliest days." It is good to look at topic and concluding sentences side by side as such a view keeps in mind the fact that in a well-written composition, be it one paragraph or more, is like a neatly tied package having no loose ends.

As the school year goes on, the idea of emphasis may also be introduced. Although the best idea is to allow children a choice of topics, one is provided here for sake of concrete illustration. In social studies children encounter the expressions "democracy" and "democratic government." In the language class, a discussion "What is democracy?" will be fruitful. The following ideas are likely to be gathered as a result of questions and discussion.

Each citizen has a vote in a democracy.  
A person attends the church of his choice.  
An individual expresses his opinion freely.  
A citizen may run for government office.  
People hold meetings freely.

Further discussion will reveal that, although the individual has the freedoms listed above, he also has responsibilities.

He should inform himself before he casts his vote.  
He should think before he expresses his opinion.  
He should be careful not to hurt others in exercising his right to various freedoms.  
As an individual and as a member of a group, he should obey the laws which are, after all, his laws.

Now to the question of emphasis. The class may decide to place the individual's rights first as these are uppermost in many people's minds. They will then

the more emphatic position at the end of the paragraph to the citizens' responsibilities. A strong point to begin with would be the right to vote; a strong point with which to finish would be the right to express opinions freely. At this point, the student is confronted with the necessity for transition from rights to responsibilities. The first of these might be chosen for its need for emphasis and for its relationship to the lost right referred to: the need to think before expressing an opinion. Perhaps the class will decide that the strongest point in this category is that a person should be careful not to hurt others in exercising his right to various freedoms. The following possible order of ideas would then demonstrate the principle of emphasis:

Each citizen has a vote in a democracy.  
A citizen may run for government office.  
People hold meetings freely.  
An individual expresses his opinion freely.  
He should think before he expresses his opinion.  
He should inform himself before he casts his vote.  
As an individual and as a member of a group,  
he should obey the laws which are, after all,  
his laws.  
He should be careful not to hurt others in exercising his right to various freedoms.

The class is now ready to formulate a topic sentence for the paragraph "What is democracy?" They will find that in order to combine these ideas into a well-constructed paragraph it will be necessary to mention both rights and responsibilities in the topic sentence. Some of the individual paragraphs composed by members of the class may later be read aloud, showing by their references that composition is a personal matter.

The achievement of emphasis, as well as of other principles of composition, will receive further attention. Grade IX class may deal in a similar way with the question "What is poetry?" Let us say that we have studied some poems, or even written some, which, we hope, will have amused, delighted, or even excited the students. The question arises, "What is poetry?" The class discusses possible answers, arriving at a list, something like the following:

Poetry is written in lines and often in stanzas.  
It uses words carefully to say just what the author means.  
It stirs the reader's feelings.  
It uses words economically.  
It appeals to the senses.  
It appeals to the imagination.

Now we may say that these ideas do not have a natural or logical order in which they may be arranged. Therefore, the class looks for two strong ideas, one to be used first after the topic sentence, the other to be used before the concluding sentence.

The students, working with the teachers' help, are quite likely to arrive at the following order, or a similar equally satisfactory one:

Poetry appeals to the imagination.  
It uses words carefully to say just what the author means.  
It uses words economically.  
It appeals to the senses.  
It stirs the reader's feelings.

During the task of arranging the ideas in an emphatic order, the students will have discovered that the idea placed at the head of the first list must be used as a topic sentence or discarded as it makes a general statement about the form of poetry but does not deal with words and ideas as do the other items in the list.

From the discussion concerning the organization of the ideas, the group will, then, move to the composition of a topic sentence. Using the topic sentence, each student could very well write his own paragraph, incorporating the ideas in the agreed order and composing his own concluding sentence. What better way is there of demonstrating that composition is a personal matter as, if there are thirty students in the class, the result will be thirty quite individual paragraphs? The children will enjoy demonstrating this truth by reading some of their own paragraphs aloud.

It may be that in the early weeks of the school year, some students will show that they have difficulty with sentence structure. For those who run sentences together or write sentence fragments, a good practice is to have them read their paragraphs aloud softly, noting the rise and fall of the voice.

Now, too, will be the time to introduce basic sentence patterns. By studying sentences used by authors in stories, students will see that there is a place in their own writing for sentences which begin in ways other than with the subject, just as there is a place for the interrogative and the exclamatory sentence as well as for the statement.

Vocabulary study will grow out of the students' own writing. The teacher can call attention to apt words which students use. The next step could be for students to look for words which are not precise or vivid. The search for precise and vivid words will require the use of the dictionary and perhaps even the thesaurus. New words, well used, will also be found in literature selections. It is important, however, not to study vocabulary as lists of words lifted from their contexts. The students' interest should always be in the right word in the right place in what the French call "le mot juste". The practice of restraint in the use of unusual words will appeal to children as they

will see that one golden roof has an impact which is lost or too overwhelming when all the roofs are golden.

And, surely, now is the time to explore the effects upon writing of such simple figures of speech as simile, metaphor, and personification, one at a time, and slowly in order to savor their force. The word "metaphor" is a convenient name, but no student should have the idea that he must use a metaphor or find one in order to prove that he is knowledgeable about metaphors. A metaphor is good writing only if it conveys the writer's idea more sharply and more fully than factual language would. The child is probably unconsciously aware of this when he says, "My kite is a bird." And, if questioned, he will examine his intentions and explain that the one word "bird" has included the opposite freedom of the kite as well as the soaring quality of its flight. He now has a conscious appreciation of the value of his own spontaneous expression. In his writing, he will in time know when to say, "My boots were blotting-paper on the rain-wet streets" as well as other fresh figurative expressions.

Early in the school year, too, attention will be given to spelling. The spelling list or authorized speller certainly has a place in the language class. But, in view of current studies, the personal spelling list deserves a place of importance, too. Both approaches to spelling help to develop an awareness of spelling which is indispensable if students are to develop some competence in spelling.

The student should compile a personal spelling list from errors made in his own writing. However, the mere act of making the list is not enough. The teacher needs to check the individual lists to see that they are kept up to date and to capitalize on them. To give a brief lesson on one type of error may clear the way for students to spell many words accurately. Such simple rules as those which apply to adding the suffixes "ful" and "ness" illustrate this truth. Another valuable procedure is for the teacher to write new words on the blackboard and to call attention to their spelling. The same treatment is good for words which the teacher knows present difficulties. The dictionary habit is a well-known aid to the improvement of spelling. Of course, what emerges from this talk about spelling is that attention to spelling must be constant. Spelling is important all the time. It may be that some disservice has been done to students by referring to the first draft of written work as the "rough" copy. The connotation of the word suggests that such a copy may be made negligently — and spelling certainly suffers under such circumstances.

Since the emphasis in the junior high school language program is on writing, the question of variety of approach certainly arises. Variety in the topics of writing will depend, to some extent, on the teacher's ingenuity. However, variety is inherent in any assignment, as each student will have his own approach to the topic. The more that students are encouraged to use their own knowledge and experience, the more will the topics bring their own excitement. Out of a boy's paper route comes knowledge of people and business experience. As he examines these in order to write about them clearly, vividly, and fluently, he gains greater skill in the techniques of composition than he would in writing on subjects remote from him, and, therefore, uninspiring. Moreover, choosing from the fullness of a particular experience helps a child to realize its significant details.

Exercises are not banned from a writing program but they must be significant. A dozen sentences chosen from students' paragraphs can give worthwhile practice in economy and clarity, as the students work to improve the sentences. Similarly, the students' own work can provide exercises in vocabulary growth, re-arrangement of ideas for emphasis, and so on.

As the year moves along, further variety is added by work employing research and outlining skills. And yet, these, too, will have their roots in the student's writing and will lead to further writing.

In the succeeding years, in the eighth and ninth grades, the skills mastered in Grade VII form a base upon which new skills are built. The child writes narration and description, as well as, and often together with, exposition. He writes several paragraphs and learns to achieve unity, coherence, and emphasis in the longer composition. His research and summarizing skills are extended. Additional grammatical knowledge, a wider vocabulary, further mechanical skills all improve his ability to write clearly, exactly, and pleasingly.

One further step will increase the students' awareness of the value of what he attempts in the language program. This is to enlist the co-operation of teachers of other subjects — and not just in a token acknowledgement that "every teacher is a teacher of English". Good organization of pertinent material is just as important in social studies, science and literature, as it is in the language course. The same can be said of good sentence structure, correct spelling, and apt use of words. The teachers of all subjects further their own purposes by agreeing upon accepted standards for all written work.

## VIII CORRELATION WITH OTHER SUBJECTS

The comments and illustrations which follow are intended to give guidance and assistance to teachers of language regarding ways in which content from other subjects can be used in the teaching of composition. These comments should not be interpreted as suggestions in any way that topics for writing will be drawn from the content of school subjects. The teacher of composition, expressing his professional freedom, should use any source he deems appropriate to further competence in writing.

### Composition and Literature

A number of reasons can be advanced for correlating literature and composition, the principal one being that there are two sides of the same coin. Both literature and composition are concerned with communicating thought and feeling. Both represent a search for a unique relationship between content and form. Both require the use of special skills for conveying meaning. In this sense, literature and composition are complementary.

It should follow that in the schools the study of one of these should reinforce that study of the other. Thus, as in the study of literature the student grows in understanding of content, of form, and of its relation to content, he can be helped to use this understanding to impose form and order on the expression of his ideas. Conversely, as the student progresses in the art of writing, he gains a basis for greater insight into the study of literature. Depending upon the grade level and the student's ability this relationship may be treated with increasing sophistication.

Some specific suggestions for the integration of literature and composition follow:

- (1) Literature can evoke from the student's lives, analogous experiences which can serve as the basis of autobiographical and personal writing. Thus students after studying Jesse Stuart's "The Split Cherry Tree", can be moved to write on a problem related to school or after reading Steinbeck's "Gabilan", on experiences with animals. Following the reading of "Indian Summer" by Wilfred Campbell, they can try to interpret their impressions of a scene or of a season. After a discussion of De La Mare's "Old Susan" they can describe an old person they know or in the light of Annabelle's experiences in Carol Brink's "Alas! Poor Annabelle!", recall some of their own embarrassments.

- (2) Literature can provide an opportunity to react personally to a specific situation presented in a selection. Thus, students might project their own possible reactions as John or as Grace after they left the backstore in Callaghan's "The Snab". Or, with respect to James's "My Encounter with a Bushman" which is told from the point of view of the white man, the students might put themselves in the Bushman's place and give his impression of and reaction to the white man. Again, after a study of the poem "Lachinvar" by Sir Walter Scott, the students might, as Lochinvar's lady, write a letter of reconciliation to the father or write the father's reply to such a letter. Students might also like to imagine themselves as a parent, a teacher or a pupil in Thomas Raddall's "The Pied Piper of Dipper Creek" and give their personal reactions to Roddie John's bagpipe music.

- (3) Literature can provide specific ideas for writing. After reading "Elephants are Different to Different People" students might describe an animal, an object, or a place, from their own point of view. A study of "Christmas in Edmonton" by Paul Kane might lead to comparison of this event with Christmas in Edmonton in 1968. On the basis of the study of several selections such as Burns' "Cotter's Saturday Night", Callaghan's "The Snab", Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott", Henry's "The Gift of the Magi", and deMaupassant's "The Necklace", students might explore a theme such as that of human relationships.

- (4) Literature selections can provide the basis for imitations or parodies. Thus, students might attempt writing an additional incident for Henry's "The Ransom of Red Chief". After a study of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell" they might attempt a parody of the mariner in a modern setting. A parody of "My Father He was a Fisherman" by Marjorie Pickthall might treat any occupation either seriously or humorously. Using "Here Will I Nest" as a model, they might write in dramatic form an imaginary incident based on the same event in Canadian history.

- (5) Analysis of literary selections, at an appropriate level, can lead to interpretive and critical level, can lead to interpretive and may present evidence from the text to indicate

the relative responsibilities of Madame and Monsieur Loisel for their ultimate tragedy. After studying the selection "Why the Apple Tree Grew in the Pine Woods" by Dorothy Canfield students might state the case for one of their own ideas with which older people disagree. From Judge Haliburton's "Shrewd Bargaining", students might seek to justify the telling of a white lie.

- (6) Literature provides models the study of which can give guidance for structure and form in the students' writing. Thus, a study of "Calgary of the Plains" may lead to their attempting a description of another city or town through the enumeration of detail. Leacock's "The Marine Excursion" may lead to an understanding of elements which students can use in attempting humorous writing of their own. A reading of Frost's "A Hillside Thaw" may provide the basis for an assignment involving the use of imagery.
- (7) Literature can lead to practice in imaginative writing. Considerations of both content and form can provide numerous insights which can be applied in students' attempts at original writing in many forms.

As in most enterprises, the teacher who uses literature as a basis for composition needs to beware of confusing means and ends. The suggestions outlined above essentially are means within the composition program. They provide ideas and contribute insights relating to structure. However, none of the suggestions implies disregard for the hard work of writing: the evaluation of ideas, the refinement of ideas, the structuring of ideas, the selection of the most appropriate words and sentences for the expression of ideas, the integration of content and form into expression which is uniquely the student's.

Neither do the above suggestions imply a disregard for appropriate classroom procedures. The comments made earlier in this guide (section VII) regarding desirable procedures for the teaching of composition cannot be neglected.

A final caution is necessary: In the relation of literature and composition care must be taken that neither area of study is sacrificed to the other. The study of literature must remain a distinct activity in its own right. Composition must be treated in its broad scope and not be allowed to degenerate into a vehicle for literature assignments. Finally, the teacher should recognize that other fields can also provide content for writing.

## B. Composition and Social Studies

The content of social studies offers opportunities for the practice of all the writing skills of the junior high school language program.

- (1) The nature of the social studies content lends itself to topics for a broad range of expository writing. Thus, students can be asked to write such personal accounts as "I Went With Mackenzie", "With the Convicts in Australia", "Across Mexico with Cortez". Again, they may be encouraged to write a letter as a young United Empire Loyalist coming to Ontario, Nehru expressing (from a jail cell) his hopes for India's independence, or as a modern immigrant expressing his reasons for wishing to live in Canada. Another assignment may require a statement of a series of related facts describing the procedure of passing a bill through parliament, the industries of the Maritimes, the stages of the Selkirk Settlement. At a more demanding level, assignments may require students to attempt the interpretation of facts as in "The Reasons for the French Canadian Loyalty During the War of 1812", "Why a St. Lawrence Seaway?", or "The Moral Implications of Automation". Many students will be able to add a further dimension, the evaluation and critical appraisal of facts relating to current and historical problems, events, and issues: "Louis Riel, Traitor or Patriot?", "Canada, the Largest State in the Union?", "Should the Commonwealth Be Abolished?" Ultimately, the level of assignments can encompass short research projects which require the student to locate, assess, organize, interpret and evaluate factual material.
- (2) Within the scope of the use of social studies material for expository writing are opportunities for practicing and developing competencies in such specific communication skills as note making, summarizing, outlining and prewriting. These communication skills require competence in locating major ideas and supporting details and in expressing these in the student's own language. Here the use of the dictionary and the proper use of reference materials may be practiced functionally. Such topics as "Contributions of the French-Canadian to Life in Canada", "The Caste System in India", and "The Legislative Powers of the Canadian Senate" are especially suited to practice in notemaking, summarizing, and outlining. "The Advantages of Commonwealth Trade", "The Causes of the American Revolution",

tion", and "The Terms of the Act of Union" lend themselves particularly to being summarized in point form. For practice in precis writing, care must be taken to select topics that contain only a limited number of major ideas. Material on the life and accomplishments of the reformers and statesmen such as Shaftesbury, William Lyon Mackenzie, and Clive may be used for precis writing.

- (3) Social studies offers countless opportunities for imaginative writing too. A student may imagine that he is a *coureur-de-bois* bargaining with Indian trappers, that he is a prisoner in the Black Hole of Calcutta or that, as a soldier in the Spanish army, he does not agree with Cortez's policies of exploitation. Students should be encouraged to use facts gleaned from reliable sources as the basis for such imaginative writing.

Again, the teacher must be aware that social studies content provides only one area of the raw material which can be used for developing composition skills. Skills themselves must be developed through guided practice in a planned writing program. The need for following a sequence of systematic procedures (Section 2) and the need for integrating writing skills with the skills of English remain for the attainment of both specific and general objectives.

Thus the assignment of a social studies topic as the basis for a report or a short research paper only initiates a series of considerations and procedures with which

the teacher of composition must be concerned. The adequacy of, or perhaps the provision for, such skills as the use of the library, the use of references, the ability to use various reading skills, notetaking, interpreting and evaluating material, paraphrasing, summarizing, planning, outlining, writing, in all its stages, and revisions needs to be considered. The teacher's objective should be to develop proficiency in such skills so that students may integrate them to express their ideas in an original, clear and unified form.

With respect to the writing of reports and research papers some further cautions are indicated. First, a teacher should ensure that an adequate quantity of reference material is available in the classroom. Second, he should check that the reading level of the material does not exceed the abilities of the students. Finally, he should ensure that students have developed the skills of restating information in their own words and reorganizing it in terms of their own perception of relationships. Unless these precautions are taken the result may embody parroting and plagiarism.

### C. Composition and Other Subjects

The resourceful teacher will undoubtedly exploit the content of other subjects to the end that the composition skills are employed to meet the specific needs of the student for clear, accurate, and fluent communication of his ideas. Sections of the science and health courses, for example, are especially suited for precis writing, summarizing, and outlining. The explanation of a process in mathematics or of an activity in physical education requires skill in expository writing.

## IX EVALUATION OF WRITTEN WORK

For the teacher of language who is concerned with the development of clear, accurate, significant student writing, who stresses language as the communication of thought and feeling, who treats language as means and not end, evaluation of student writing must be more than the measurement of achievement. The main function of evaluation should be to teach.

In the process of helping students impose form and order in the expression of their ideas, the evaluation of themes is one means of guiding students individually, as well as collectively, toward the goal of competence in writing. Through evaluation, the teacher not only provides an audience for the ideas which the student expresses, he also gives the student an opportunity to submit his ideas and his control of them to rigorous analysis. Evaluation involves consideration of what the student is trying to say, of how he says it, and of the accuracy and correctness with which he says it. The way in which a teacher evaluates student writing can influence the responsibility and sincerity with which the student writes and may determine the commitment which he will make to wanting to improve his expression.

If writing is indeed to be concerned with the expression of thought and feeling, then the teacher's primary concern should be with content and organization. He needs to be alert to the potential worth of a theme. He should be aware of the student's insight into the subject, of his acuteness of perception, of his ability to develop a progression of thought clearly and logically. As he reads, he should express his reactions to the student's ideas. He may remark on the aptness of a phrase, suggest a re-arrangement of sentences, indicate a statement which is irrelevant to the topic, question the logic of a relationship implied, and enlarge upon an idea expressed. The comments should be specific and insofar as possible should produce a reaction, in turn from the student. They should stimulate the student to examine closely those things which have been commented on and lead him to a greater awareness of the relationship which exists between thought and language. Evaluation, thus, constitutes the meeting of minds and ideas.

Content, however, cannot be dissociated from correctness of language; errors in structure and mechanics impede communication. The teacher, therefore, needs to attend to mechanical errors in students' writing. Here, procedures vary. They range from indicating all errors to concentrating on several most prominent ones and attending to their elimination. Whatever the procedures, it is important to show that content and mech-

anical correctness are not really separable, that meaning is determined by correctness and accuracy.

Evaluation, however, is not a discrete activity; it is implicit in all the stages of a writing assignment, from the conception of the topic to the final disposition of the students' work. In a sense, evaluation begins when the topic for a class theme comes into the teacher's consciousness. The degree to which the teacher has a clear conception of his objectives and procedures will determine, in part, the quality of the work students will submit. The clarity with which the teacher is able to transmit an understanding of the assignment to students, the degree to which he provides for an adequate exploration of the topic, for a thoughtful examination of the subject, will affect evaluation. The success with which his methods enable students to master new skills and to perceive the relevance of specific skills to the development of a particular assignment will be reflected in the effectiveness of their writing. The procedures which a teacher uses and the attitudes he attempts to develop during the stages of writing and revision, are important for evaluation; here, the teacher can make clear his expectations and guide students to accept greater responsibility for the quality of their work. Unless expectations are clear, students may not produce the quality of work of which they are capable; unless students are willing to accept responsibility for what they write, there seems to be little point in telling them how they may improve their writing. The work that needs to be done during the actual teacher marking of student papers on a particular assignment will be affected by what has been done in antecedent activities. In large measure these will determine whether marking of themes will be a worthwhile activity or a chore for the teacher, and, more important, whether it will be of value to the student. However, even marking does not terminate activities affecting evaluation.

Evaluation should be treated as a generative activity, not as a terminal activity. The effort expended on a theme assignment by students and teacher warrants more than a hurried distribution of marked papers during the last five minutes of a language period. The bundle of themes represents the attitudes to and abilities in language of the students who make up the class. More than any textbook they embody the language program for this particular class. They suggest the direction and emphasis for that program. The return of marked papers, therefore, implies a series of language activities — discussion, explanation, reading, remedial work, skill building exercises, revision — which may well comprise the most important stage in helping students learn to write. The requirements of the task

the degree to which they were met may be discussed. A particularly good paper may be read and merits commented on by the students. A paper showing potential not fully realized may be revised by the entire class. On the basis of an item analysis the teacher can prepare vocabulary, spelling, grammar usage exercises. Areas of major error may imply teaching, drill and retesting. On occasion the class may be required to revise and resubmit themes on a particular topic after errors and weaknesses have been indicated. Weaknesses in form will indicate further work. Coherence, introductions and conclusions may be strengthened through brief assignments written under teacher's direction and supervision. The possibilities are limited only by the skill and ingenuity of the teacher.

Ultimately the concern in instruction in writing should be with trying to help the student and recognizing that his paper is only part of the means to that end. While regular practice needs to be provided in composition, frequency of practice, in itself, is not likely to produce improved student expression. Even frequent writing combined with intensive evaluation, but unaccompanied by other procedures, may not effect improvement. Practice is most likely to improve writing when assignments are made within a planned, sequential composition program, when each assignment includes a sequence of procedures ranging from motivation and preview to follow-up. The time which is required to carry out this sequence of procedures effectively for each assignment will have a bearing on the frequency with which students are asked to write. The emphasis in writing should not be on quantity, but on quality.

## X EVALUATION IN LANGUAGE

If the objectives of the language program are kept in mind, the teacher should evaluate the pupil for his ability to communicate ideas and feelings both in speaking and in writing. Evaluation in language must, therefore, take into account, for each student, the degree to which he has achieved all the objectives of the program, and his growth towards the realization of the objectives.

Oral language activities including the student's ability to speak and report or to convince and influence the class should certainly be considered in the over-all evaluation of a student's facility in language.

A student's ability to listen and follow directions should also enter into the evaluation picture.

Evaluation will include an assessment of competence in such skills of language as vocabulary, spelling,

punctuation, capitalization, and in the application of grammatical concepts to the construction of sentences. Evaluation will also assess such skills as the ability to organize and express ideas, to select main and subordinate ideas, and to paraphrase and summarize the ideas found in source materials. Evaluation will be concerned with an assessment of the student's growth in the maturity and worthwhileness of his own ideas. In essence, evaluation is a continuing process which enables the student to know where he stands in his handling of language and what he needs to do in order to increase his competence in the use of language.

The final evaluation, in terms of a composite of all language skills taught during the year, should reflect the student's ability to integrate the various facets of a language program into clear, forceful, pleasing oral and written communication.

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